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under ice, and looked like Greenland Haltle basin, because these places were at that time in the West or in the ossisting at they at Kurshes of castlery distribution of distribution of the constant of the c Arrana show a race of blond suvages European, The earliest traces of the Aryan claims to be in any way Semite, are invaders. Of these only The European abortginal man was the Meanderthal, The three races of Gaucasian stock, Aryan, Alpine, and Samite are invaders (II these only Aboriginal Europeans.



Mother Howard looking at him with eyes defiant, yet compassionate. Suddenly they twinkled, the lips broke from their straight line into a smile, and a kindly old hand reached out to take him by the arm.

"Don't you stand there and try to tell Mother Howard she don't know what she's talking about!" came in what she's talking about!" came in tones of mock severity. "Henr me? Now, you get up them steps and wash up for dinner. Take the first room on the right. It's a nice, cheery place."

In his room, Fairchild tried not to

think. His brain was becoming too crammed with queries, with strange happenings and with aggravating mysticisms of the life into which his father's death had thrown him to permit clearness of vision. Even in Mother Howard he had not been able to escape it; she told all too plainty, both by her actions and her words, that she knew something of the mys-tery of the past—and had falsified to keep the knowledge from him.

It was too galling for thought. Rob-ert Fairchild hastily made his tollet, then answered the ringing of the dinner bell, to be introduced to strongshouldered men who gathered about the long tables; Cornishmen, who talked an "h-less" language, ruddyfaced Americans, and a sprinkling of English, all of whom conversed about things which were to Fairchild as so much Greek—of "levels" and "stopes" and "winzes," of "skips" and "man-ways" and "rises," which meant nothing to the man who yet must master them all, if he were to follow his am-

Robert Fairchild spoke but seldom, except to acknowledge the introductions as Mother Howard made him known to each of his table mates. But it was not aloofness; from the first, the newcomer had liked the men about him, liked the ruggedness, the mingling of culture with the lack of it, liked the enthusiasm, the muscle and brawh, liked them all—all but two

Instinctively, from the first menwatching him, two men who sat far in the rear of the big dining room, older than the other occupants, far less inviting in appearance. One was small, though chunky in bulld, with sandy hair and eyebrows; with weak, filmy blue eyes over which the lide blinked constantly. The other, blackhaired with strenks of gray, powerful

in his build, and with a walrus-like mustache drooping over hard lips, was the sort of antithesis naturally to be FOR SALE—One plane at \$125, and found in the company of the smaller, another at \$250. Inquire at Grant howere, what they were, Fairchild did not know, except from the general attributes which told that they too followed the great gamble of mining. But one thing was certain; they watched him throughout the meal; they talked about him in low tones and ceased when Mother Howard came near; they seemed to recognize in him someone who brought both curiosity and innate entity to the surface. And more; long before the rest had finished their meal, they rose and left the room, intent, apparently, upon some important

After that, Fairchild are with less of a relish. In his mind was the certainty that these two men knew himor at least knew about him-and that they did not relish his presence. Nor were his suspicions long in being ful-filled. Hardly had he reached the hall, when the beckoning eyes of Mother Howard signaled to him. Instinctively be waited for the other diners to pass him, then looked eagerly toward Mother Howard as she once

more approached,
"I don't know what you're doing here," came shortly, "but I want to." Fairchild straightened. "There isn't much to tell you." he answered quietly, "My father left me the Blue Poppy mine in his will. I'm here to work it." "Know anything about mining?"

"Or the people you're liable to have to buck up against?" "Very little."

"Then, Son," and Mother Howard laid a kindly hand on his arm, "whatever you do, keep your plans to yourself and don't talk too much. And 11-tf what's more, if you happen to get into communication with Blindeye Bozeman and Taylor Bill, lie your head off. Maybe you saw 'em, a sandy-haired fellow and a big man with a black mustache, sitting at the back of the room?" Fairchild nodded. "Well, stay away from them. They belong to 'Squint' Rodaine. Know

She shot the question sharply.

Again Fairchild nodded. "I've heard the name. Who is he?" A voice called to Mother Howard from the dining room. She turned away, then leaned close to Robert Fairchild. "He's a miner, and he's always been a miner. Right now, he's mixed up with some of the biggest people in town. He's always been a man to be afraid of-and he was your father's worst enemy!"

Then, reaving Pairchild staring after the kitchen

CHAPTER V

Impatiently Fairchild awaited Mother Howard's return, and when at last she came forth from the kitchen, he drew her into the old parior, shadowy now in the gathering dusk, and closed

"Mrs. Howard," he began, "I-"

"Mother Howard," she corrected. "I ain't used to being called much else." "Mother, then-although I'm not very accustomed to using the title. My own mother died—shortly after my father came back from out here."
She walked to his side then and put a hand on his shoulders. For a mo-

ment it seemed that her lips were struggling to repress something which strove to pass them, something locked behind them for years. Then the old face, dim in the half light, calmed. What do you want to know, Son?"

"Everything!"
"But there isn't much I can tell." He caught her hand.

"There is! I know there is. I—"
"Son—all I can do is to make mat ers worse. If I knew anything that would help you—if I could give you any light on anything, Old Mother Howard would do it! Lord, didn't I help out your father when he needed it the worst way? But I'm as much in the dark as you. All that I ever knew was that your father came to this boarding house when he was young man, the very first day that he ever struck Ohadi. He didn't have much money, but he was enthusiastic —and it wasn't long before he'd told me about his wife and baby back in Indianapolis and how he'd like to win out for their sake. As for me well, they always called me Mother How-ard, even when I was a young thing, ard, even when I was a young thing, sort of setting my cap for every good-looking young man that came along. I guess that's why I never caught one of 'em-I always insisted on darning their socks and looking after all their troubles for 'em instead of going out buggy-riding with some other fellow and making 'em jealous." She sighed ever so slightly, then chuckled. "But

that ain't getting to the point, though, is it?" "If you could tell me about my fa

"I'm going to-all I know. Things were a lot different out here then from what they were later. Every-where around the hills and guiches you could see prospectors, with their gads and little picks, fooling around like life didn't mean anything in the world to 'em, except to grub around in those rocks.

"Your father was one of these men 'Squint' Rodaine was another—they called him that because at some time in his life he'd tried to shoot faster than the other fellow—and didn't do it. The bullet his right between his eyes, but it must have had poor powder behind it-all it did was to cut through the skin and go straight up his forehead. When the wound heated. the scar drew his e assetse together like a Chimmon's View never so Squint's eyes here the bal open "And he's seen to your object

eyes-" Mother Howard's voice bore a touch of resentment. "I never liked him from the minute I first saw him, and I liked him less afterward. Then I got next to his game.

"Your father had been prospecting just like everybody else. He'd come on float up Kentucky gulch and was trying to follow it to the vein. Squint saw him-and what's more, he saw that float. It looked good to Squint-and late that night, I heard him and his two drinking partners, Blindeye Bozeman and Taylor Bill—they just reverse his name for the sound of ittalking in Blindeye's room. I'm a woman-" Mother Howard chuckled-"so I just leaned my head against the door and listened. Then I flew downstairs to wait for your father when he came in from sitting up half the night to get an assay on that float. Squint and them two others was figuring on jumping his claim before he could file on it and all that. "Well, there was a big Cornishman

here that I was kind of sweet on-and I guess I always will be. He's been gone now, though, ever since your father left. I got him and asked him to help. And Harry was just the kind of a fellow that would do it. Out in the dead of night they went and staked out your father's claim-Harry was to get 25 per cent-and early the next morning your dad was waiting to file on it, while Harry was waiting for them three. And what a fight it must have been—that Harry was a wildcat in those younger days." She laughed, then her voice grew serious. "But all had its effect. Rodaine didn't jump that claim, and a few of us around here filed dummy claims enough in the vicinity to keep him off of getting too close-but there was one way we couldn't stop him. He had power and he's always had it-

strange things happened to your faher after that-charges were filed against him for things he never did. den jumped on him in the dark, then went to the district attorney's office and accused him of making the atack. And the funny part was that tack. And the funny part was that the district attorney's office always believed them—and not him. Once they had him just at the edge of the penitentiary, but I—I happened to know a few things that—well, he didn't go." Again Mother Howard chuckled, only to grow serious once more. "Men who went to work for your father and Harry disappeared. er got hurt accidentally in the mine or just quit through the bad name it was getting. Once Harry, coming down from the tunnel at night, stepped on a little bridge that always before had been as secure and safe as the bills themselves. It fell with -they went down together thirty feet, and there was nothing but Nature to blame for it. in spite of what we three thought. Then, at last, they got a fellow who was willing to work for them in spite of what Rodaine's crowd-and it consisted of everybody in power-binted about your father's bad reputation back East and-"

"My father pever harmed a soul in his life!" Fairchild's voice was hot, resentful. Mother Howard went on: "I know he didn't, Son. I'm only telling the story. Miners are super-stitious as a general rule, and they're childish at believing things. It all worked in your father's case-with the exception of Herry and 'Sissie' Larsen, a Swede with a high voice, just about like mine. That's why they gave him the name. He went to work. A few months later they got into good ore. It looked like the bad luck was over at last. Then-"

Mother Howard hesitated at the brink of the very nubbin of it all, to



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Robert Fairchild. A long mome followed, in which he represed a de-sire to seize her and wrest it from her, and at last—

"It was about dusk one night," she went on. "Harry came in and took me with him into this very room. He kissed me and told me that he mus go away. He asked me if I would go with him—without knowing why. And, Son, I trusted him, I would have done anything for him-but I wasn't as old then as I am now. I refusedand to this day, I don't know why. It was just woman, I guess. Then he saked me if I would help him. I said

"He didn't tell me much; except that he had been uptown spreading the word that the ore had pinched out and that the hanging rock had caved in and that he and 'Sissie' and The Three of Us Drove Up the Main your father were through, that they

were beaten and were ming away that night. But—and Harry waited a long time before he told me this—'Simil' was not going with them.

"I'm putting a lot in your handa," he told me, but you've got to help us. "Sisaie" won't be there—and I can't tell you why. The town must think that he is. Your voice is just like "Sisaie'a." You've got to help us out "And I promised. Late that night,

the three of us drove up the ma street, your father on one side of the seat, Harry on the other, and me, dressed in some of 'Sissie's' clother half hidden between them. Nobod dreamed that I was anyone else but the Swede—my head was tipped for ward, so they couldn't see my fo tures. We drove outside town and stopped. Then we said goodby, and I put on an old dress that I had brought with me and sneaked beck home.





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